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THE BIG BROTHER.

BY MRS. M. E. SANGSTER.

It was a treat to the little Ransoms to be allowed to enter the big brother's room. Indeed, it was a wonderful place, and I always used to feel highly honored when I had a peep into it myself.

To begin with, Joe Ransom was a tall sophomore at college, when Will and Bert were boys of nine and twelve. What Joe thought and did and said was therefore of vast importance in the eyes of the juniors. That he was stroke in the college boat crew, and had carried off all the honors of his class in study, helped to magnify him in their opinion; and really the other fellows sometimes felt as though the Ransoms were much too boastful of their big brother. Had nobody in town such a possession except those two? After the day, however, when little Eugene Peters fell into the mill-stream, and Joe Ransom, loitering by in tennis-shirt and knickerbockers, dashed into the current, and saved the boy just as he was sinking the fateful third time, he became the village hero; and every boy who belonged to Townsend Corners felt a thrill when the gallant rescue found its way, nobody could imagine how, into a great city newspaper. Just one line, in small type, in an obscure corner, but that was enough to star Joe Ransom's name with glory, which was not soon to fade.

Returning to the room, however, I want to tell you of a talk that went on there one evening at dusk, when Bert, Will, Sammy Gleason, Art Fish, and three or four more boys, had been looking at Joe's collection of moths and butterflies, inspecting his birds' eggs and stumps, and hearing him tell the story of his latest mountain climb.

The clock struck eight, and Mr. Ransom, from the foot of the stairs, called, "Time for prayers, Joe!" "Come, boys," said Joe, putting down the fishing-tackle he had been adjusting, and promptly leading the way. Art hung back, but Bert drew him on, and presently they were all joining, almost before they knew it, in the evening hymn:

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if thou be near,"

Mrs. Ransom sat at the piano and played, her husband sang bass, Gertrude and Lucy supplied the soprano and alto, Joe's voice was a fine baritone, and the boys each added something in sweetness and freshness to the melody.

"That was charming!" said Mrs. Ransom, as the last note died away. "Papa, shall we sing another hymn?"

"Two or three, if you like," he replied, and one favorite after another was asked for and sung.

Then Gertrude read a chapter and Mrs. Ransom said very simply:

"Joe, I am tired this evening. I wish you would pray."

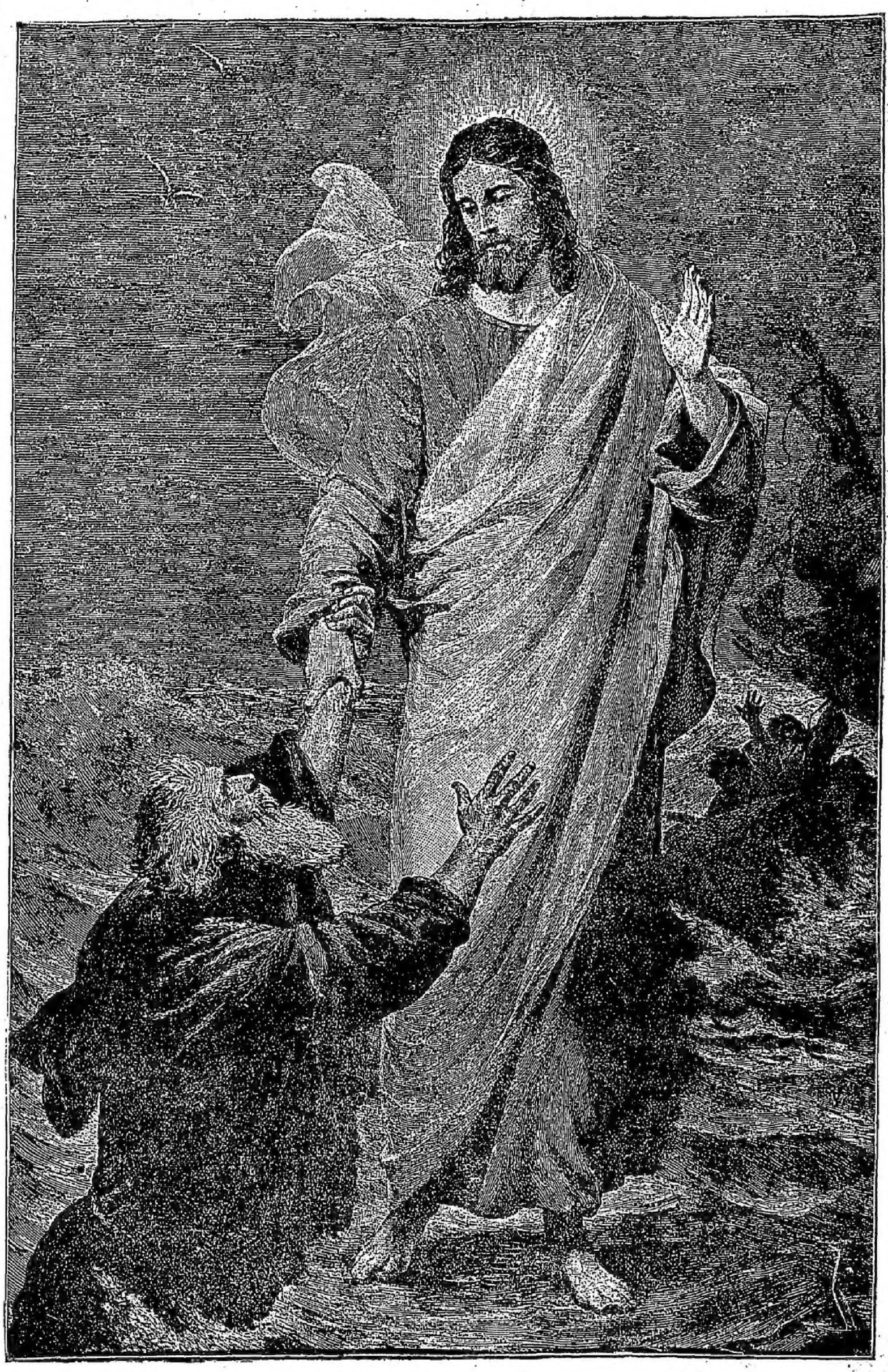
Without the least hesitation, and as if he were speaking to some one who stood at his side, the big fellow made a brief prayer, after which they all went upstairs again to his den.

Art Fish had been staying away from Sunday-school lately. He thought himself too large to go, now that he was fifteen; and though nobody at home knew it, he had grown very careless about reading the Bible and praying. He felt ashamed and uneasy now, as the words of Joe's prayer lingered in his mind

"Forgive us for everything wrong we have done this day. Make us kinder, truer, more gentle with each other. Keep us safely when we sleep, and may we waken to-morrow to be thy brave soldiers and servants,"

Finally, Art spoke:

"Joe," said he, "do you think a fellow can be a Christian without joining the church?"



"JESUS, OH MY MASTER! SAVE!" See next page.

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"Let me get at your meaning, Art," said Joe. "What do you suppose makes anybody a Christian?"

"Believing in Christ, I suppose."

"Certainly. Well, what's the next step to believing in any one? Is it not owning the belief? Suppose, Art, that you like and believe in me, and some stranger comes along who knows nothing about me whatever. Would you be ashamed to say, 'I think you may depend on Joe Ransom; he is my friend?'"

"What do you take me for?" inquired Art hotly. "I'm not such a sneak."

"Well, suppose you are in somebody's company, and suddenly you hear my name mentioned slightingly, and the person who speaks of me gives those who listen an unfair impression, what then?"

"Of course, I'd speak up for you. I'm not a coward."

"If we were using Bible words, Art, we would say that you would confess me. You would let everybody know that, as for you, you were ready to stand or fall by Joe Ransom, that Joe Ransom was a man you'd tie to, that you'd stake your life on his honor."

Art drew himself up proudly.

"I rather think that states the case, old fellow," he said.

"There, then, is precisely what a Christian does when he joins the church. He confesses Christ before all the world. Just as a soldier enlists, and is not ashamed of his uniform, or a sailor is ready to die for his flag, a Christian owns his Master, when he stands up and confesses him."

"Then," Joe went on, "he gets himself into such good company. It's sometimes hard to fight all alone, but a man fights splendidly with his captain ahead of him, and a lot of true comrades by his side. Why, three or four soldiers have faced hundreds, when standing together in a strong position. Don't you know what I'm driving at?"

Little Bert here spoke, rather timidly:

"Mamma says there is another reason for our joining the church, if we love Christ."

"Yes, Bert," said Joe.

"It is," the little fellow proceeded, "because he told us to do so;" and he repeated reverently, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Soon after the little assembly broke up; but at the next communion, Art united with the church. He had taken his place again in his class, and had shown that he was not ashamed to be seen engaged in Christian work. But when he was asked what decided him, at last, to take the right step, he said, "My talk with Bert's big brother, one summer evening."—*Sunday-school Times.*

SAVED BY KINDNESS.

We will call him *Jim*, for I do not remember his name. He had lost all respectability and was a common gutter drunkard. His family had disowned him and would not recognize him when they met him. Occasionally he would get a job at the stables where Dr. Davis kept his horses. One morning the doctor laid his hand on his shoulder and said:

"Jim, I wish you would give up the drink."

There was something very like a quiver of the man's lips as he answered:

"If I thought you cared, I would; but there is a great gulf between me and you."

"Have I made any gulf, Jim? Think a moment before you answer."

"No—you haven't."

"If you had been a millionnaire, could I have treated you more like a gentleman?"

"No, you couldn't."

"I do care, Jim."

"Say it again, won't you?"

"I do care, Jim," with tender little emphasis on the Jim.

"Dr. Davis, I'll never touch another drop of liquor as long as I live. Here's my hand on it."

This was fifteen years ago; and "Jim" is to-day the respectable and respected Mr. ——. Saved by a kind word! Will you make an effort this week to win some one by kindness?—*Christian Advocate.*

GREATNESS.

No great deed is done
By falterers who ask for certainty.
—*George Eliot.*

LORD, SAVE ME!

BY MRS. L. D. A. STUTTLE

Overhead the lightning flashes,
And the raging water dashes,
As upon the foaming sea
Of the stormy Galilee,
Peter and his comrades toil,
While the angry waters boil.

Hark! the storm grows strong and stronger,
Can they keep their courage longer?
Look! a form all clothed in white
Fills their souls with dread affright,
Till a well-known voice they hear—
"It is I. Be of good cheer."

Then they know it as the Master,
And their hearts beat fast and faster.
"Jesus, master, speak to me,
Bid me, bid me come to thee,"
Speaks a voice in tones so brave,
"Bid me walk upon the wave."

Thus the impetuous Peter crieth,
And the blessed Lord replieth
"Come," and quick his hurrying feet
Tread the waves his Lord to meet.
Ah! he sinks beneath the wave,
"Jesus, oh my Master! save!"

Then the master quickly caught him,
Safely to the boat he brought him,
Whispering in his doubtful ear,
"Wherefore, Peter, didst thou fear?"
Then the waves grew calm and still,
And the winds obey his will.

Ah! how oft on life's rough waters,
Adam's faithless sons and daughters
Sink in sorrow and in grief,
Sink in doubt and unbelief,
Sink like Peter on the wave,
Till they cry, "Oh, master, save!

"Save me, save me, ere I perish,
Vain are all the hopes I cherish;
Lead me! I am sick and sore,
Guide me till the journey's o'er:
Save me from the whelming wave,
Master, I am sinking! save!"

Then the blessed Master hears them,
Strengthens and upholds and cheers them,
Gives them grace the cross to bear,
Gives them strength to do and dare,
Gives them courage all the way,
Till there dawns a brighter day.

Up, my soul! there's light and beauty,
In the grand highway of duty,
Though like Peter ye may sink,
And the dregs of sorrow drink,
Though in danger and alarm,
Grasp the Everlasting Arm.
—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

A HEROINE OF THE STORM.

HOW A YOUNG NEBRASKA SCHOOL TEACHER SAVED HER PUPILS.

Not many miles from the town of Ord is situated the school-house of Mira Valley school district. This house is a small frame structure, and the nearest dwelling to it is at least one-half mile distant. Thursday morning, Jan. 12, when the blizzard came, there were in the little schoolhouse Miss Minnie Freeman, the teacher, yet in her teens, and 13 pupils between the ages of six and fifteen years. The children were wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement by the fury of the storm. In the midst of the teacher's assurance that all would be well a terrible gust of wind struck the building, the windows rattled, the house shook, and the door of the structure was torn from its hinges. It was then the young teacher realized the necessity of preparing for emergencies. With an exhibition of rare judgment, she gathered her little brood together, and securing a coil of strong, heavy twine, began with the largest ones and tied the children together by the arms and bodies, three abreast. This completed, she huddled her charges around the stove and awaited the pleasure of the storm king. Its furious work came sooner than was expected. The terrific gale, sweeping everything before it, struck the building and carried away, in the twinkling of an eye, the entire roof of the structure, leaving the frightened little ones exposed to the elements. The time for prompt action had arrived, but the plucky teacher was equal to the emergency. Taking the youngest and frailest of her charge in her arms, she tied the remaining end of the twine around her own body, and with all the words of encouragement she could muster, the courageous teacher started with her "team" of frightened little ones out into the fury of the storm. Those who have braved the terrors of a Nebraska blizzard need not be told that it required courage to amble a young girl to breast those furies, having in her keeping the lives of thirteen little ones and the happiness of thirteen homes. Those who felt and suffered from the effects of the recent eastern storm need not be told that the act of that young girl was one from which strong men might quail. Selecting her way carefully, following in the course of the storm, the brave girl led her little charges through snow drifts and blinding blizzard, now cautioning them about their steps, now encouraging them to cheerfulness, and all the way, herself bearing an additional burden of somebody's darling, urging them into renewed efforts. And thus it was that after a wearisome journey of three-quarters of a mile, through all the fury a storm could muster, the little band reached the threshold of a farmhouse, where they received a hearty welcome. At the house where they found shelter one of the children made its home, and if the eyes of a loving mother filled with tears as she pressed her little one to her heart, they were not dried when she gave to the brave young teacher an embrace in which was embodied all the love and gratitude within a mother's heart. It is safe to say that the subsequent reception of Miss Freeman in all the homes whose little ones she had rescued perhaps from death was equally as warm as that accorded in the first instance.—*Youth.*

KEEPING THE SCHOLARS.

An exchange gives the following six short rules for keeping the scholars in the class, that will work well anywhere:

1. Keep yourself there. A good way to kill is to keep away. The class scatters when the teacher is absent. Where you find a class without its teacher, you will soon find a teacher without his class. Be there yourself.

2. Know your lesson. To attract and fix others, have something with which to attract and fix. If you would draw the iron, there must be power in the magnet. An empty teacher will empty his class-seat.

3. Keep the scholars by keeping the parents. Call at the homes of your class. You strengthen your hold on the scholar when you secure a hold on the parent.

4. Have an interest in everything affecting their welfare. Guide them in their reading, and have a thought for their health. What does our class cost us? The amount of cost will measure the size of results. It is useless to expect a crop when you sow little and cultivate less. By loving and serving your class you keep them.

5. Keep your scholars by mighty prayers for them, by an Israel-wrestling style of supplication. Let your aim and effort be to bring every scholar into obedience to Christ. The more religion in the scholar, the greater attachment to the teacher. It is the converted boy or girl that makes the permanent scholar.

6. You keep most when you think least of keeping, and simply give to God the full measure of your duty up to the brim, doing intensely, persistently, thoroughly, when you yourself are submitted fully to the Lord Jesus, and just breathe out the spirit of consecration that abode in him.—*Christian Sunday-school Teacher.*

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON XII.—JUNE 17.

THE GREAT COMMISSION.—Matt. 28: 16-20.

COMMIT VERSES 18-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.—Ps. 68: 11.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

It is our duty to send the Gospel to the whole world.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Matt. 28: 16-20.
T. Mark 16: 15-20.
W. Luke 24: 36-53.
Th. John 21: 1-24.
F. Acts 1: 1-12.
Sa. Acts 2: 1-18.
Su. Acts 2: 22-47.

INTRODUCTION.—Of the eleven appearances of Jesus, five occurred on the Sunday (April 9) of his resurrection, and one on the following Sunday (April 16). But the great meeting with Jesus for his final message to the church was to be in Galilee. Some time was required for extending the notice of this meeting among the widely scattered believers, over Judea and Galilee. Soon after April 16, the apostles went up to Galilee, and while waiting there Jesus appeared to seven of them on the shores of the lake (John 21: 1-17). Soon after this was the eighth appearance, referred to in to-day's lesson.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

16. *The eleven:* at the same time probably the five hundred, mentioned in 1 Cor. 15: 6, were assembled with the eleven. *Into Galilee:* as Jesus had appointed them (26: 32; 28: 7, 10.) 17. *Worshipped him:* bowing down at his feet in reverence. 18. *All power:* the word means *power* and *authority.* This was given to insure the success of his kingdom. *In heaven:* the power of God, the power of the Holy Spirit, power over the angels, power over all spiritual influences. *And, in* (on) *earth:* power as a teacher, as a guide, power to make all things work together for the good of his cause, power over his enemies, power over nature. 19. *Go ye therefore:* not wait for them to come to you. *Teach:* disciple, lead to Jesus. *All nations:* Not Jews only. The Gospel is for the world. *Baptizing them:* as a public confession of Christ. *In the name:* *into* the name, the *one* name of the triune God, *to belong to God.* 20. *To observe:* to keep and watch over *always,* all the days, each day and all days. *End of the world:* the human world, the conclusion of the reign of man on earth.

SUBJECT: THE GREAT COMMISSION.

QUESTIONS.

I. THE GREAT MEETING (vs. 16, 17).—Where did Jesus appoint a meeting with his disciples? (See also 26: 32; 28: 7, 10.) Who went there? (v. 16.) What occurred while they were waiting? (John 21: 1-21.) Who probably met with the apostles at this time? (1 Cor. 15: 6.) What did all do when Jesus appeared? What did some do?

II. THE GREAT COMMISSION; MISSIONARY (vs. 18, 19.)—What did Jesus say to them at first? How much power and authority was given to Jesus? What was his power *in heaven?* What *on earth?* Why was this necessary? What is the first duty of Christians? (v. 19.) Meaning of *teach* here? Does this commission include work close at hand? What must we do there to fulfil it? Does it include home missions? Does it include foreign missions? Have we any right to neglect any nation or people because of our interests at home? Does foreign missionary work help home missions? What was first to be done to the converts? Why must they be baptized? Meaning of *into the name,* etc.?

III. THE GREAT COMMISSION; TEACHING (v. 20).—What is the next work of the church? What are we to teach? Does this include doctrines as well as precepts? Where can we find what Jesus has commanded? Meaning of *observe* here? If it is the duty of the disciples to teach, is it therefore our duty to learn? Can we be good Christians without this teaching? How does the act of teaching help the teachers themselves? Is such Christian work necessary for even the youngest Christians?

What promise did Jesus make? How would this encourage all disciples to obey this last great command?

IV. THE ASCENSION (Mark 16: 19, 20, Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1: 9-12.) What was Jesus' last act in his earthly body? From what place did he ascend? In whose presence? What was the object of the ascension?

LESSON XIII.—JUNE 24.

REVIEW AND TEMPERANCE LESSON.—1 Cor. 8: 1-13.

REVIEW.

We have been studying the life of Christ for a whole year in succession, and therefore it will be well to take, as it were, a bird's eye view of his life, that the main incidents may be deeply impressed on our memories.

SUBJECT: THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

QUESTIONS.

I. HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.—When was Jesus born? In what place? Who was his mother? Give three *chief incidents in his early* life? Where did he spend most of his time? In what occupation? When and where was he baptized? How was he tempted?

II. THE TIME AND PLACE OF HIS MINISTRY.—How long did Jesus' public ministry last? In what places was most of it spent? What other countries did he visit? Name the chief cities he visited; two mountains, a lake, a river, the place where he died.

III. HIS TEACHINGS.—What sermon of Jesus is recorded? In what way did he do much of his teaching? Name some of the principal parables he spoke. What are some of the great truths he taught?

IV. HIS MIRACLES.—What are some of the principal miracles he wrought? Against what evils and enemies of man were they directed? What was his purpose in working miracles? Were they all miracles of help and blessing?

V. INCIDENTS REVEALING HIS CHARACTER.—How did Jesus gain the victory over temptation? What did his example teach us about keeping the Sabbath? What do you learn about him from his appearance on the mount of transfiguration? What from his washing his disciples' feet? from his agony in Gethsemane? from his words on the cross?

VI. THE ATONEMENT ON THE CROSS.—Who betrayed Jesus? Where? What did he receive for it? Before whom was Jesus tried? Who mocked and reviled him? When was Jesus crucified? In what place? How long was he on the cross? *How many times did he speak while* he was being crucified? What events took place at his death? Where was he buried?

VII. HIS RESURRECTION.—How long was Jesus in the tomb? On what day did he rise? Give some proofs that he rose again. How many times did he appear? For how many days? What was his last message to his church? How and when was he last seen by his disciples?

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Second Quarter, 1888.)

1. Apr. 1.—The Marriage Feast.—Matt. 22: 1-14.
2. Apr. 8.—Christ's Last Warning.—Matt. 23: 27-39.
3. Apr. 15.—Christian Watchfulness.—Matt. 24: 42-51.
4. Apr. 22.—The Ten Virgins.—Matt. 25: 1-13.
5. Apr. 29.—The Talents.—Matt. 25: 14-30.
6. May 6.—The Judgment.—Matt. 25: 31-46.
7. May 13.—The Lord's Supper.—Matt. 26: 17-30.
8. May 20.—Jesus in Gethsemane.—Matt. 26: 36-46.
9. May 27.—Peter's Denial.—Matt. 26: 67-75.
10. June 3.—Jesus Crucified.—Matt. 27: 33-50.
11. June 10.—Jesus Risen.—Matt. 28: 1-15.
12. **June 17.—The Great Commission.—Matt 28: 16-20.**
13. **Review, Temperance.—1 Cor. 8: 1-13, and Missions.**

THE HOUSEHOLD.

CAREFUL MOTHERS.

Dear "Housekeeper Sisters :"

I have not felt quite free to take part in the mothers' discussions, because, no matter how good my resolutions may be each morning, when night comes it overtakes me with a big bundle of regrets strapped tightly above my shoulders. And yet there are some offences that I never commit towards my children.

In the first place, I never frighten a child. Mice come out of holes to nibble the cookies or to search for crumbs, but never to bite the babies. We do not like rats because they eat our apples, and bore holes in our squashes, but no baby of mine ever thought of being afraid of the cellar. Rats, they know, are afraid of them, and we delight in going down cellar with a pan for potatoes, a basket for vegetables, and a pail for apples. Here we go, clatter, clatter, mamma holds little Love's hand lest he fall. The Clover Lodge cellar is a particularly nice one, or rather the cellars are nice, one being all solid cement (this was the old square cistern under the kitchen), and then there is the lighted cellar in front with plastered walls and a brick floor. Here is the swing shelf, and we select a can of corn or peas, turn a can of peaches about to see if it is keeping well (all canned fruit should be wrapped in brown paper, so I tell Birdie, posting her little by little on housekeeping matters), take a look at a pot of hyacinths to see if they seem sufficiently well rooted to be transferred to the sunny nursery windows, and Little Love runs his fingers deep into the sand in the box where the parsnips are buried, while Dot fishes out big Tallman Sweets or brilliant Northern Spys for Pet and the Cherub, who cannot, as yet, dive into barrels. Then we take, each his load, and start up stairs. Oh, but that rogue Little Love, where is he? "Turn on, Sunshine!" Pet calls, looking back as she climbs the stairs, and down comes her apronful of apples. "Oh, Oh!"Sunshine squeals, bobbing out of his hiding place under the stairs, "appy! appy!" and away he scrambles after them. Sunshine loves to go down cellar and play "shinny" with the apples, And that is all they know about the fear of rats.

And then again, I never yet have said, "I'll tell your father if you don't stop that," or "You'll catch it when papa comes." In the first place, I don't believe in controlling children in that way. If Tom were, in truth, a very ogre I should not do it. I am certain that it makes no difference with me that he never was able to make the children obey—unless they wanted to—and though I would be glad if he would take his half of the responsibility, yet the mother who is obliged to shower these useless tell-your-father sort of threats is not, to my mind, a success as a wise, judicious mother.

And I never yet told a child that medicine was "good" or "sweet" or any other lying adjective, if it was not. How many times have I seen the blue eyes, the black eyes and brown, look anxiously into my face while I "sampled" the new medicine. Did you ever give the little ones a dose of castor oil? Put a few drops of lemon juice in the spoon, all around the dose, and then it is not bad. But if a medicine is bad, I dilute it as much as possible, some I can sweeten a little, then I own to them that it is not good, but declare that we will be brave and just take it like a flash. And we do it every time.

The portion that mamma declared good, when proven to be exactly bad, is doubly bitter. And then if the little ones can not trust mamma's word, heaven pity them.

When they ask to be allowed to go to some particular place or do some particular thing, I never say "I will see" and let the little things endure agonies of hope and fear until my "high mightiness" gets around to relieve them. We council together, and settle the matter as nearly as possible. If we feel sure that papa could judge better than we, then of course we have to leave the matter until he comes home. But the careless "O, I'll see," I could never abide.

And I never think it wise to have the children out on the streets at night. In summer we all sit on the porches, or swing in the hammock, or, perhaps roll in the short grass, the smaller ones of us; and sometimes we all turn out for a walk on moonlight nights or go sleigh-riding down the hills; but this is not the steady diet, so to speak. Inside the gates in summer; around the lights and tables in winter, and then there are no bad associates, no evil influences to leave stains on the receptive little minds. The habit of staying off the streets after dark is easily formed, and habit, you know, next to hunger, is the most arbitary ruler man has. A habit for good is a stronghold of defence, a habit for evil—we all know how that is.

A word to the young mothers may not be amiss. From my experience and observation I would say, do not notice the little pranks and ways that will last but a few days at most. If they smack their lips while eating their bread and milk, admonish, reason with them, draw their attention to something else, and wait until day after to-morrow when it will be forgotten. It is not worth while to send them from the table to-day in disgrace. Unpleasantness at meals will injure the strongest stomach; then what will it do to the tender little ones? Besides, babies have very sensitive nerves and may grow up nervous, dyspeptic men and women if vexed and worried in their childhood. And more than this, a child that is scolded and slapped continually grows sour and vindictive, and the mother has no one but herself to blame if a little later her "bread cast on the waters" comes back to her with an exceedingly bitter flavor.

I began with Birdie with the idea that anything else than a model baby would be a ruined baby, and if, instead of being well and strong and as tall as myself to-day, she had died in her childhood, I can see what an accusing demon my memory would be. But it did not take me long to get over this folly. I found that she outgrew all her little faults and notions that a child takes up, and it has been years since a slap or a punishment has been known in Clover home.

Perhaps I might add, there never were "dark closets" or "down cellars" into which the little Clovers were thrust, but when worst came to worst it was always a genuine orthodox spanking, and a moment later the tears were wiped up and kissed away that there need remain no sting of disfavor.—Kit Clover, *in the Household.*

A STITCH IN TIME.

When the clothes come from the wash they should be sorted by some one who is sufficiently skilled and observant to let no defect escape her eye. Each garment should be opened and inspected, and then refolded in the original creases. The firmness of the threads holding buttons should be tested with a little tug, button-holes scanned, bindings, seams, and trimmings scrutinized closely. Each piece that needs only a stitch should be laid aside. The adage that a stitch in times saves nine verifies itself weekly in the experience of the housekeeper. A large basket may hold all the mending except the stockings, These should have their own bag. Being smaller than the other pieces, they are more apt to become mislaid. As they are examined they should be paired. Those that need repairing may be drawn into one another and consigned to the mending bag, while such as are in good order may be turned, rolled tightly, and put away.

The mending basket should be supplied with everything needful for performing the task easily and satisfactorily. Brick-making without straw is not much more difficult than doing fine mending well without the proper aids. One spool of stout white cotton, another of black silk, a paper of needles, a pair of scissors, and a thimble comprise nearly the entire furnishings of many family work-baskets. With such inadequate means, it is no wonder that repairing a garment and disfiguring it are likely to amount to about the same thing.

To properly equip the basket several grades of white cotton are necessary, ranging from No. 36 to No. 90. Needles to correspond should also be provided. Besides these, there should be such colored cottons as are apt to be required for the family sewing, three or four spools of black silk of varying degrees of fineness, skirt braid, rolls of tape both narrow and wide, pearl and porcelain buttons of different sizes, neat pieces of cambric, muslin, linen, and flannel for patching, a braid of variegated silks for gloves, a measuring ribbon, a wax, an emery ball, bodkins, large and small, and button-hole scissors, thimble, shoe-thread, needles, and buttons, hooks and eyes, etc. By having all these arranged in pockets or pouches in one basket, endless time and trouble in searching may be saved. A large piece box, near at hand, should hold scraps of dresses that may be needed to repair the gowns they match.

Nor should the stocking bag be less fully stored with darning cotton of the necessary tints, darning egg, and long needles. The example taught by Mrs. Whitney in her picture of the girl who simplified stocking mending by always having a full supply of long darning needles threaded is worthy of imitation.

The larger pieces of mending should receive the first attention. They are more bulky than the stockings, and there is a feeling of having accomplished the chief portion of the week's sewing when they are out of the way. Worn spots should either be neatly patched or darned down on a piece set under them. Laying a patch by the thread is a very nice undertaking, and tedious to an inexperienced sewer. Garments that have begun to fray on the edges should be re-bound or re-hemmed before they are worn rough. Lace is more easily mended before washing. When it once begins to go, it is hardly worth while to waste time upon it. Better rip it off at once, and replace it with new trimming. It is not enough to sew buttons on when they are off; they should be tightened as soon as they show any signs of loosening. Torn button-holes may be strengthened by putting a tiny patch of tape at one side. It serves as a stay, and makes the button hole look neater. The Biblical prohibition against putting a piece of new cloth into an old garment should be carried into effect in modern mending. If the patch must perforce be of new material, it should at least be washed and shrunk before it is applied.

Stockings should always be mended with cotton of the same color. A single thread must be used. The thread should be run through the fabric some distance on each side of the hole as well as back and forth across it. Worn places also should be darned before a real break appears. The old custom of running the heels of stockings before they were put on at all is almost obsolete, but its revival might not come amiss in large families where there are plenty of small feet to tread out the heels of stockings while the rest of the foot and the leg are still good. The heel protectors that are sold at most large shoe stores save wear to the stocking. So does the habit of changing the hose often enough to prevent their becoming stiff with dirt or perspiration. Mothers of little children occasionally sew a piece on the inside of the stocking knee to prevent the skin showing as the outer covering becomes frayed.—*Harper's Bazar.*

THE SLEEP OF CHILDREN.

A child should be in bed as the fowls are, at sundown at least. And he should be allowed to rise in the morning as soon as he wakes. It is not only torture but an unhealthy mischief to compel children to lie in bed awake two hours to prevent disturbing older people. The morning sun is most essential to plant life. A conservatory should always, if possible, be on the east side of a house. It is equally true that the morning sun is most valuable for animal vigor, and that includes human beings. We, all of us, are breaking both ends of the laws. Our sleep should be taken earlier, and we should never fail of getting the morning sun.

I abominate night parties for children. I believe every physician does. It is not so much the exposure and the eating in the night, and the bad associations formed (of a high-toned sort, possibly) but the breaking into the sleep habit. Equally bad is it for children to study in the evening. It gorges their brains with blood, and if they sleep they dream. I had a little patient of twelve years, who was wasted and nervous, and whose dreams were filled with his problems. It was a marvel and pride to his parents that the youngster worked out hard problems in his sleep, such as he failed to master when awake. But he came near his final problem. I locked up his books at 4 o'clock. He must not touch one after his supper. He must play and romp, and then go to bed. He is now robust. You can not emphasize too strongly the mischief of children's night study.

Whatever a stolid lot of animal natures can do our American children are sensitive and can not do—that is sleep safely two in a bed. No matter in what else you economize there is a criminal folly in economizing beds. Every person needs his own bed more than he needs his own chair, or his own plate at table. And the best bed in the world is a good bed of fresh straw covered with plenty of quilts. No child should be allowed to sleep on feathers, or animal refuse of any sort. But to sleep two in a bed is a vital damage. One is sure to absorb the electric energy of the other. What we must look for is to accumulate constitution for the child, and establish a stout conservative tendency. Our American life will be sure to make heavy drafts on him. If he has no capital he can pay no interest. This habit of sleeping alone should be retained through life under all circumstances. More mischief, as well as immorality, comes from the opposite course than from any other common habit.

Above all things to be deprecated is the stormy season so frequently indulged in just at retiring. The child prefers to sit up, and invariably retires in a storm of passion, added to by the storm of nurse or parent. He should be calmly and firmly restrained from all such outbreaks. There is a great difference in children about retiring; some very active brains grow sleepy and desire to retire early; others equally active grow wakeful and excited.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

PUZZLES—No. 12.

A LONG SLEEPER.

Black and deep in the mountain side
My resurrection day I bide;
Once I stood in glory clad,
When the earth no man beheld;
Mammoth creatures passed me near,
Naught had I from them to fear;
Ages piled their mould above.
From my fated spot to rove
Was not lotted unto me;
I must wait until set free.
Some day, will this dull, hard frame
Into warmth and beauty flame.
Some day I shall travel far
Where my treasures needed are,
Where the northern blast is sweeping,
Where the dreadful cold is creeping,
There I wake, all rosy, bright,
Live a day of glad delight,
Giving health, and warmth, and cheer,
Vanishing I know not where.

CHARADE.

'Twould cause you no affright;
But spoil your appetite
To view the filthy sight,
When you sit down to eat,
And see *first* on your meat,
You'd call your cook a cheat.

Unarmed and out at night,
'Twould fill you with affright;
Should *second* come in sight.
So horrid his grimace,
So ruthless his embrace,
You'd shun his hiding-place.

Have courage, fainting soul,
Nor let my threatening *whole*
Divert you from your goal;
Heed not each false alarm,
My whole can do no harm,
Can none but cowards disarm.

PRIMAL ACROSTIC.

The primals spell the name of one of the greatest and best men who ever lived.

1. One of his friends.
2. The name he gave the pope.
3. His life-work.
4. The forest where he lived when a boy.
5. The pardons against which he fought so bravely; also the missile he cast at his enemy in prison.
6. The profession of his wife.
7. The title of the prince of his country.
8. The place where he was educated.
9. The man who sold the pardons.
10. The songs which he wrote.
11. His birthplace.
12. Another of the things against which he fought.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES—NUMBER 11.

Rebus.—Psalm 84. 3.

Hour Glass.—

L E O P A R D
S T A L E
E R E
A
E B B
P I L E D
Q U I E T L Y

Beheadings.—1. Clock-lock. 3. Tale-ale. 3. Bracket-racket. 4. Coat-oat. 5. March-arch. 6. Chair-hair.

An Old Riddle.—He was his father.

Numerical Enigma.—Maple sugar.

PRIZE PUZZLE.

Look out in the next number of the *Messenger* for a large illustrated PRIZE PUZZLE.

It will be of special interest to boys, though attractive to all, old or young.

A handsome book will be given to the one who sends in the best answer. Full particulars will be given with the puzzle.

The Family Circle.

THE MYSTICAL BALL OF YARN.*

A story is told, as quaint and strange
As some tale of fairy-lore;
A lesson it has for you and me,
So I tell it to you once more,
It may not be now
As a story to you,
Yet patiently listen because it is true.

To a distant land far over the sea
A herald of Christ was sent,
The Gospel-standard of Light to raise
On a darkened continent.
The labor was sweet
And the recompense meet:
Soul-captives made free, at the dear Lord's feet.

They earnestly labored, this man good and true
And his helper so patient and fair;
For they knew in the home-land far away
Were many an Aaron and Hur,
Who faithfully prayed
And their weak hands upstayed
While the battle waxed fierce; so they were not afraid.

And with message of love came often a gift,
Their brave hearts to gladden and cheer;
And 'tis here that the story strange begins,
Of a gift so wondrous queer,
That they pondered and thought,
And wondered and wrought,
O'er a ball of yarn with mystery fraught.

Its colors were scarlet, and purple, and brown;
All shades intermingled, and tints,
A medley chaotic—no purpose or plan—
And the letter gave only these hints:
"Knit this yarn, patient friend,
From beginning to end,
And carefully follow the rule which I send.

"'Of stitches, the first on the needle, and last,
Must ever and always be white;
Let the other hues come as they may—in the end
You will see that the knitting is right;
And that rose-tint and grey
Each falls its own way;
And the task when completed your toil will repay."

So the mother began, and patiently wrought;
And the children came often to ask
(As in her deft fingers the needles fast flew)
If the meaning she saw of her task?
Though the answer was "Nay!"
Yet faithful to-day,
With hope for the morrow, she kept on her way.

The days passed to weeks; and true to her task
The work in her hands grew apace;
And the good-man would come from his study and books
Some meaning, or purpose, to trace;
When lo! in surprise,
Their glad waiting eyes,
Saw a pattern of beauty from chaos arise.

Perhaps they who sent this strange ball of yarn,
A lesson of trust would convey:
Lest these toilers, because of the long weary road,
Discouraged, should faint by the way.
Of them it was true,
As it may be of you,
"'They builded," for God, "better far than they knew."

So to us who are knitting the strange thread of life,
Full of tangles, and sullied with care,
Let us patiently work, though we see no design;
Heeding only the white stitch of prayer.
May we never forget
That the end is not yet;
And the task is the one that our Father has set.

It may be that when the dark river is crossed,
And our faith shall have bloomed into sight,
The work which here caused us but sorrow and tears,
Will then fill our souls with delight;
As each color in place,
We joyfully trace
The pattern complete, through God's mercy and grace.

MRS. JOSEPHINE C. GOODALE.

*An incident in the life of the late Dr. William G. Schauffler, of Constantinople.

GOOD-BYE is the contraction of "God be with you." When you say good-by you always say "*God be with you.*"

EVERY great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the product of enthusiasm.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

The other day I heard a story of unusual presence or mind. It was told by one who had himself received it from an officer of one of the greatest railways that cross the Allegheny Mountains.

"There," said the officer to my informant, as both were going about a great central station, where cars and locomotives were made, repaired and kept, "there is the very man. If he wants any favor of the road, he has only to ask for it. The rest of us come and go; but he stays, and may stay, service or no service, till death removes him. The road is grateful to him, and will always hold him, in honor."

Many years have elapsed since the incident happened; many more since the telling of the tale to my friend. The details of the coloring vary somewhat as they pass from mouth to mouth. No doubt, when you have finished the story, you will say, "Why, that was the very thing I would have done myself." But would you have done it? Here is the story:

Puff! puff! puff! It was hard work; for the grade was steep and the train long and heavy. The engine panted as if its strength were failing, and no wonder. For miles and miles up the slopes of the Allegheny Mountains it had been tugging its precious burden, and there were many miles more before it should reach the summit and tarry awhile to regain its strength.

Much of the way was little more than a shelf cut into the mountain sides with rising walls of rock on the one hand, and deep ravines on the other. And far up among the mountains, often on the opposite sides of huge and gloomy chasms, the observant traveller would catch glimpses of what seemed to be the curves and embankments of another road. Later he would be himself borne over these very chasms, and whirled around these curves.

These changing scenes kept the passengers in a tremor of half-joyful, half-anxious excitement.

"How beautiful that wooded slope!"

"Shall we ever get to the top of the ridge!"

"Down here among the trees! See this silvery cascade!"

"Ah! here we go through a tunnel."

"That great bowlder looks as if the slightest jar would bring it down upon us!"

"What if the roadbed should give way here like an avalanche!"

"Oh, here comes some trestle-work! How frail it looks! And what a dizzy height! If it should break under us—oh, dear!"

Just then a quick sharp, whistle was heard. To those that understood it, it said imperatively, "Down brakes, and be quick about it, too! Instantly the brakemen were straining at their posts as if every life were threatened. Indeed, it was their duty, on these hard, treacherous grades, to stand by the brakes, and use them at a moment's warning. People thrust their heads out of the car windows, and some hurried to the platforms, and there was a deal of nervous questioning. What was the matter? Had an accident happened? Was there any danger? Nobody seemed to know. Not even the brakemen were informed. And it was the gift of blessed Providence that the cause was not revealed, else that moment of uncertainty and subdued alarm would have been one of anguish and disaster.

Far up the road the engineer had caught a glimpse of an awful peril. It was a train of runaway freight cars. For a moment it was in plain sight, dashing around a curve, then it was lost in the woods. No engine accompanied it; there were no brakemen visible; there was no sign of life anywhere about it. Nowhere on the grade at that time was a down train due. The cars were without control; there was no doubt of it, and there was nothing to check their descent. Already they were running furiously, and every second their speed was increasing. A collision seemed inevitable. The destruction of life would be frightful.

What should the engineer do? To stop his train would not mend the situation. To reverse the train and go the other way—there was hardly time for that. Besides, it would only postpone the certain result, and make it more dreadful because of the increased headway of the runaway cars.

The engineer viewed the situation on every side. Plan after plan rose before him; plan after plan was dropped. But it was all done with that wonderful speed which the mind shows when under the stress of swiftly nearing danger. In that brief time the engineer lived hours. Suddenly there was a ray of hope, a possible plan of safety. "Down brakes!" he whistled. This was the signal to which we have already called attention; the one that sent the tremor through the hundreds on the train.

"Free the engine from the train!" he shouted to the fireman. The engine was uncoupled, and the train was left lagging behind. "Now jump for your life." There was no time for parley. The fireman leaped, fell, and scrambled to his feet again. Then the engine put on full steam. Freed from its burden of coaches, the locomotive responded at once.

"Now fight the battle for us!" exclaimed the engineer, as he sprang from the steps. His quick eye had chosen a favorable spot on which to alight. Though thrown headlong with some force, he was on his feet promptly enough to see his train roll by at lessening speed, under the full control of the faithful brakemen.

That something serious had happened or was about to occur began to be clear to the passengers. One or two had seen the fireman jump, two or three, the engineer; and large numbers from the car-windows had caught snatches of men that, soiled and bruised and dazed, were trying to rise to their feet by the side of the track. All was excitement and tumult. So began to leap from the cars. Fortunately there was little danger now, for the motion of the train had nearly ceased.

Up the track, meanwhile, went the iron monster to meet the foe alone. Down the track, into full sight, came wild freight cars with a speed so great that they almost rose from the rail as they rounded the curves. Nearer and nearer, the speed of each increasing. Then they flew at each other in a mighty, tiger-like rage, as if it were blood to be shed and nerves to be torn asunder.

The crash shook the hills. A great, roaring cloud of steam burst into the air, while another of dust and debris boiled up and mingled confusedly with it. Then the shattered ends of the cars shot out here and there from the smoke, and a grinding, crackling mass rose up. Quivering in the air a moment, it reeled, and then went crashing down the embankment into the ravine below. When the steam and dust cleared away, there were the deep, ugly furrows in the roadbed, and the splintered ties, and the bent and broken rails, and the nameless fragments of an utter wreck, to mark the scene of the fierce encounter.

The gallant engine was a hopeless ruin; but it had done a noble service. It had fought a battle in which hundreds of lives and untold interests were at stake, and it had won it. Not a life of that precious company was lost, not a member of it hurt by so much as a scratch. Before they saw their peril, they were rescued from it; and yet their rescue had hardly been completed before the full and awful nature of that peril burst upon them, and stirred them in their inmost being.

With tears of joy and gratitude they blessed the engineer whose quick wit and daring plan and instant execution had saved them from a fate that at one moment seemed beyond human power to avert. And to the poor locomotive that lay dismembered and useless on the rocks below, there went out a kind and tender feeling, as if, in giving its life to save others, it had shown something akin to the love and bravery and sacrifice of a noble human soul.—*Congregationalist.*

MORAL SUASION OR PROHIBITION.

A young man once advised me to advocate pure moral suasion. At a meeting where this young man was present I said to the audience, pointing to him, "Some say we ought to advocate moral suasion exclusively. Now I will give you a fact. Thirteen miles from this place there lived a woman who was a good wife, a good mother, a good woman." I then related her story as she told it:

My husband is a drunkard; I have worked, and hoped, and prayed, but I almost gave up in despair. He went away and was gone ten days. He came back ill with the small-pox. Two of the children took it, and both of them died. I nursed my husband through his long sickness—watched over him night and day, feeling that he could not drink again nor ever again abuse me. I thought he would remember all this terrible experience. Mr. Leonard kept a liquor-shop about three doors from my house, and soon after my husband was well enough to get out, Mr. Leonard invited him in and gave him some drink. He was then worse than ever. He now beats me, and bruises me. I went into Mr. Leonard's shop one day, nerved almost to madness, and said, "Mr. Leonard, I wish you would not sell my husband any more drink."

"Get out of this," said he, "away with you! This is no place for a woman; clear out."

"But I don't want you to sell him any more drink."

"*Get out, will you? If you wasn't a* woman, I would knock you into the middle of the street."

"But, Mr. Leonard, please don't sell my husband any more drink."

"Mind your own business, I say."

"But my husband's business is mine," she pleaded.

"*Got out! If you don't, I'll put you* out."

I ran out and the man was very angry. Three days after, a neighbor came in and said, "Mrs. Truttle, your Ned's just been sent out of Leonard's shop so drunk that he can hardly stand!"

"What! my child, who is only ten years old?"

"Yes."

The child was picked up in the street and brought home, and it was four days before he got about again. I then went into Leonard's shop and said, "You gave my boy, Ned, drink."

"Get out of this, I tell you," said the man.

I said, "I don't want you to give my boy drink any more. You have ruined my husband: for God's sake spare my child," and I went down upon my knees, and tears ran down my cheeks. He then took me by the shoulders and kicked me out of doors.

"Then," said I, pointing directly to my friend, "Young man, you talk of moral suasion? Suppose that woman was your mother, what would you do to the man that kicked her?" He jumped right off his seat and said, "I'd kill him! That's moral suasion, is it? Yes, I'd kill him, just as I'd kill a woodchuck that had eaten my beans."

Now, we do not go as far as that: we do not believe in killing or persecution, but we believe in prevention and prohibition. —*John B. Gough.*

AN OLD CLOCK'S ADVICE.

A correspondent says that in his great-grand father's house, as he has heard his mother tell, there was a clock on which was the following inscription:

"Here I stand both day and night,
To tell the time with all my might;
Do thou example take by me,
And serve thy God as I serve thee."

The old clock remained in the family for many years, but the time of which it told so faithfully at last conquered it, as it conquers all things on earth.—*Exchange.*

A PET THEORY of those who are unwilling to accept total abstinence as the truest temperance, in the line of liquor drinking, is that pure wines and ciders are comparatively harmless, in contrast with adulterated liquors. Yet there is no form of drunkenness which has more of brutality in it than that which is a result of cider-drinking; and from the days of Noah to the present day, a man who has been made drunken by home-made wine is likely to be as disgracefully drunken as if it were strychnine whiskey which had brought him down. Only a few days ago a silk-weaver in Hebron, Connecticut, murdered his wife and two children, and set fire to his house. He was a Swiss immigrant, and believed in home-made liquors. The telegraph report reads: "He had half a dozen barrels of home-made wine and cider in his cellar, and drinking from these made him crazy, and promoted the murder." If the blood-stained ashes of his household show the sort of home made by home-made wine and cider, total abstinence from those liquors would seem to be the truest temperance.—*Sunday-school Times.*

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

"Give us a story by Miss Alcott!" "I like "Little Women" better than any other book on my shelf." "I have read all Miss Alcott's books, and love her dearly," are among the frequent expressions for which I have learned to look in the Children's letters, writes Mrs. Sangster in *Harper's Young People*. The sweet, true-hearted woman, whose death at Roxbury, Massachusetts, on March 6th, has "eclipsed the gayety" of childhood, was, as Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes strikingly said, the "Hans Christian Anderson and Daniel Defoe of America." The candor and simplicity, the winning directness, the breezy freshness, and the sturdy scorn of anything mean or underhanded, which mark her writings, make them peculiarly wholesome and free from taint. "She is such a good fellow," said an enthusiastic boy, getting up from an afternoon's absorption in "Little Men," with a feeling that at least one woman in the world knew all about boy nature, and sympathized with boys in their trials and aspirations. Every little girl who has ever read a story of Miss Alcott's has had a sense of cuddling close up to the author and leaning against her knee, while she heard her fascinating talk, so magically did the winsome voice speak through the silent type.

I heard a touching incident last summer, illustrative of the life-likeness with which Miss Alcott invested her heroines. It was at a hamlet in Maine, where a lady, tarrying for a holiday rest, had established a tiny lending library for the children of the place. It had only a few volumes all told, but among them was included the "Old-fashioned Girl," and this speedily became the favorite book, passing rapidly from hand to hand, and eagerly waited for by those whose turn had not yet come. One pleasant afternoon, as the lady sat in her cosy little parlor, her dainty knitting on her lap, a bare-footed child, panting, flushed, excited, pushed open the door, exclaiming, without other preface: "Is she in? Is she in?"

"Is who in?" naturally inquired the lady.

"The Old-fashioned Girl," was the quick reply. "I've been picking blackberries all day, and I've walked three miles to get her and take her home with me."

"But," said the lady, appreciating the child's humor, "she's not fit to go out again until I have had time to mend her dress. See, my dear. The leaves are loosened from the binding, and the poor Old-fashioned Girl is in a sad plight."

"I'll mend her up, if you'll only let me take her away," pleaded the little berry-picker, departing in an ecstasy to tramp three miles homeward over a rough road with Miss Alcott's book hugged to her breast. Imagine how she pored over it by the light of the evening lamp in the family sitting-room!

Yes, the children have lost a friend, and there is hardly a household where English is spoken in any part of the globe in which Miss Alcott has not had honest mourners among the boys and girls. These will like to know something about her life.

Louisa May Alcott was born on November 29, 1832, in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Her father, A. Bronson Alcott, was a distinguished lecturer and teacher of his time, one of the first at a period when schoolmasters were very severe, ruling principally by harsh methods, to insist that gentleness was more influential than the rod, and to show that education should bring out the best that was in a child's nature, not simply cram a young mind with facts.

His daughter Louisa was born on her father's birthday, and it is beautiful to learn that as all their lives they kept this pleasant anniversary together the gentle angel of death took them home at almost the same time. Only a day intervened between Mr. Alcott's death and that of the child who had been his constant companion and tender friend during all her life. The genial and gentle philosopher, whose ideas had furnished food for thought to some of the most eminent people of the century, was eighty-nine; just a year old, you see, when 1800 came in. Miss Alcott's mother was a May, a descendant of the Sewall and Quincy families of Boston. Mrs. Alcott died in 1877, and the daughter more than ever devoted herself to her father in his loneliness. In 1882 a stroke of paralysis rendered him very dependent on her constant care and nursing, and she gave herself without stint to ministering to his need. About three years ago, when she was busy on "Jo's Boys," her health broke down, no doubt from overstrain, and her physicians forbade her writing any more. This injunction, however, was only partially obeyed, for at each recurring holiday it was hard to withstand the clamors of the children all over the world for a Christmas story from their beloved Miss Alcott; and when a friend asked her for only a verse or two, for charity's sake, at the Yule-tide, she wrote sweetly, "The doctors say no; but I can deny you nothing at Christmas time."

A backward glance over Miss Alcott's life is interesting. We may fancy her a romping, merry child, in the days when little maidens wore stout stuff dresses in winter and calico in summer, and were not afraid to climb fences, nor coast with their brothers. But she was studious too, and with such teachers as her father and Mr. Thoreau, she would receive as many lessons from Nature as from books.

At sixteen she followed in the footsteps of the New England girl of her day, and began to teach school. No doubt her pupils liked her, but she found teaching irksome, and felt her call to a wider work than could be found within four walls. Her big school-room, although she did not know it then, was to be the wide world. For, so long as she lived, the dear lady was a teacher, each of her books, under the fun and frolic, the record of home happenings, and the bright conversation, having some moral lesson to convey. Children are kinder, more unselfish, braver and more independent, through the influence of her words. Nobody who did not love children could have so understood what they wanted.

During the civil war, Miss Alcott served for some time as a volunteer nurse at Georgetown, near Washington. The work was hard, the watching and anxiety painful, and together induced an attack of typhoid fever, of which she nearly died. Never after this was she so strong as in her earlier years, when she laughed at the thought of an ailment, and could endure great fatigues without inconvenience. After the war she published a book entitled "Hospital Sketches," telling about her experience in nursing the sick and wounded soldiers. This was followed by "Moods," and then she went to Europe, where she spent a year in pleasant loitering and travel.

Although Miss Alcott began to write when she was only sixteen, she waited a great while before she had any marked success. The Amy, Jo, Beth, and Meg of her "Little Woman" were real girls, herself and her sisters, and the lives in the book were very much the lives which had been lived in the cheerful home hive with her own dear father and mother. Neither author nor publisher expected a golden harvest to follow the appearance of this unpretending little volume: but the children hailed it with acclamation, and 87,000 copies were sold in less than three years. Indeed to this day, although many gifted pens have been occupied in the interest of the children, and many lovely stories have been written for them, this is yet in demand. No juvenile library for nearly twenty-one years has been complete without this charming book, whose title was a happy thought, a real inspiration.

Since 1867, when "Little Women" carried our hearts by storm, Miss Alcott has been a diligent literary worker, seldom taking for herself any leisure. Fame and fortune came to her. In addition to her other work, she "mothered" the daughter of her dead sister May, her pet and darling, bringing up her niece in accordance with her own theories to be robust in body and healthy in mind, pure-hearted, joyous, and true. "An Old-fashioned Girl" set her sweet pattern of girls as Miss Alcott thought they ought to be in 1869. "Little Men" made their bow to us in 1871. "Aunt Jo's Scrap-bag" came out for Santa Claus's special benefit, and one by one, each secure beforehand of a cordial welcome, her pretty household stories followed. The children know their names by heart—"Eight Cousins," "Rose in Bloom," "Under the Lilacs," "Spinning-wheel Stories," "Jo's Boys" and the rest.

It was a beautiful, brave, bright life which closed on the March morning when the daffodils she loved were lighting their torches for the spring. Probably she did not know, so soon had unconsciousness set in upon her brain, that the dear father was gone. And, I fancy, very sweet must have been the surprise when the two, whose mortal lives had been as one, met face to face in the fair land where there is no death, nor any more pain, nor tears, nor trouble.

To pay your own way, to stand upon your own feet, to serve God, and love your neighbor, are the motives of Miss Alcott's work for children. She amused and entertained them not only, she elevated and stimulated them to a higher plane and nobler living. Especially do mothers owe her a debt for the common-sense light, free from silly or morbid sentiment, in which she set the friendships of boys and girls, every one of her books being pure, sweet-toned, and natural. We are sorry, with the children, that she is gone.

THE LATE LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

IF I WERE A VOICE.

CHARLES MACKEY.

If I were a voice—a persuasive voice—
That could travel the wide world through,
I would fly on the beams of the morning light,
And speak to men with a gentle might,
And tell them to be true.
I'd fly, I'd fly o'er land and sea,
Wherever a human heart might be,
Telling a tale, or singing a song,
In praise of the right, in blame of the wrong.

If I were a voice—a consoling voice—
I'd fly on the wings of air:
The homes of sorrow and guilt I'd seek,
And calm and truthful words I'd speak,
To save them from despair.
I'd fly, I'd fly o'er the crowded town,
And drop, like the happy sunlight, down
Into the suffering hearts of men,
And teach them to rejoice again.

If I were a voice—a convincing voice—
I'd travel with the wind;
And whenever I saw the nations torn
By warfare, jealousy, or scorn,
Or hatred of their kind,
I'd fly, I'd fly on the thunder-crash,
And into their blinded bosoms flash,
And, all their evil thoughts subdued,
I'd teach them Christian brotherhood.

If I were a voice—a pervading voice—
I'd seek the kings of earth;
I'd find them alone on their beds at night,
And whisper words that should guide them right—
Lessons of priceless worth.
I'd fly more swift than the swiftest bird,
And tell them things they never heard—
Truths which the ages for aye repeat,
Unknown to the statesmen at their feet.

If I were a voice—an immortal voice—
I'd speak in the people's ear;
And whenever they shouted "Liberty!"
Without deserving to be free,
I'd make their delusion clear.
I'd fly, I'd fly on the wings of day,
Rebuking wrong on my world-wide way,
And making all the earth rejoice—
If I were a voice—an immortal voice.

TEMPERANCE ARITHMETIC.

Please work out this problem and think it over:—

A young man, now 21 years old, began to smoke cigarettes at the age of 14, and smoked 10 cents' worth daily. How many books, at $1 each, could he buy with the money spent?

The 4,000 saloons in San Francisco take in daily an average of $10 each; how many dollars are paid daily in that city for liquor?

PRAYING TO A LETTER-BOX.

We are so accustomed to the conveniences of the post-office system in our country that we think little of them, but to the poor natives of India some of them are deemed objects of worship and to be propitiated with gifts:

In one case a man posted his letter in the box and shouted out its destination, to inform the presiding spirit whom he supposed to be inside.

Another native humbly took off his shoes as he approached the box, went through various devotions before and after posting his letter, and finally put some coppers before the box as a propitiatory offering, retiring in the same attitude of humility.—*Youth's Companion.*

FRICTION—"O Frank! come and see how hot my saw gets when I rub it." "That's the friction," said Frank, with the wisdom of two years more than Eddie boasted. "Yes," said sister Mary, who was passing, "it's the friction; and it makes me think of two boys who were quarrelling over a trifle this morning, and the more they talked the hotter their tempers grew, until there was no knowing what might have happened if mother had not thrown cold water on the fire by sending them into separate rooms."—*Child's Paper.*

OTHER PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS.

"What makes every one love to be with you?" the sweet, simple and unaffected Princess Alice once asked her grandmother, the Duchess of Kent. "I am always so sorry to have to leave you, and so are all others who come here. Won't you please tell me, grandma?"

The old lady smiled, and for a moment that was all she did.

The Duchess of Kent knew the secret of her influence over her friends, but how to explain it without vanity or egotism to this most natural and truthful little girl at her side was not altogether an easy task. Alice's sweet directness could never be put off with a pooh-pooh or a disclaimer, as the dear old lady knew from an intimate acquaintance with her character.

"I think, my child, that this is the reason," the Duchess replied at last. "I was early instructed that the way to make people happy was to appear interested in the things which interested them—namely, their own affairs; and this could only be accomplished by burying one's grief, annoyance, satisfaction, or joy completely out of sight.

"Forgetfulness of one's own concerns, my dear, a smiling face, a word of sympathy and unselfish help, where it is possible to give it, will always make others happy, and the giver equally so."

Such counsel as this took deep root in the heart and mind of the Princess, and her brief but exceptional life proves the wonderful power of unselfish regard for others.

Where could a better lesson for all our girls be found than this one, given so many years ago by the aged Duchess?

Other people's affairs? Why, our own affairs are of infinitely more importance to us, and yet, if we take the trouble to look about us, we are sure to find that the most agreeable and helpful persons are those who lend a ready ear to the sorrows of others, and keep a closed mouth concerning their own.—*Youth's Companion.*

COLD WATER AND CLOUDS.

Did you ever stop to think, when you looked out of the window and saw dull, gray clouds from which the rain was so steadily pouring, and which seemed to shut in the world all around, that, in reality, they extended over a very small part of the country; that somewhere else, perhaps only twenty or a hundred miles away, the sun was shining, and all was bright and beautiful? This is really the case. For storms, however long and dreary, do not extend over many miles; and though it always is raining at some place in the world, yet always and at the same time it is pleasant somewhere else. Now, let us see why this is.

Suppose that on a warm summer afternoon we were to bring a pitcher of clear, cool water, fresh from the well, and to place it on the table in the dining-room. Now, no matter how carefully we may have dried the pitcher before bringing it in, we shall discover, if we watch closely, that the outside soon becomes wet or misty; and that the mist grows heavier and then gathers into drops and perhaps even runs down the pitcher to the table.

Now, where does this water come from? Not through the sides of the pitcher, that is impossible; but from the air. We cannot see it, perhaps, but still it is there, in the state of vapor. How came it there? Did you ever notice, after a rain, how in a short time the puddles became dry, and how the moisture disappeared from the grass and leaves, as soon as the sun shone out and the wind blew? Or, did you ever notice that if you left a pan of water out-of-doors the water each day grew less and less, until all was gone and the pan was dry?

All the water that was in the puddles, on the grass and leaves (except that which soaked into the ground) and in the pan, was taken up as vapor into the air—has "evaporated," as we say. The same thing happens when water boils, only it then evaporates more rapidly, and we can see the vapor arising as steam. If you live near a river, or in a country where there are brooks, perhaps you can see this evaporation actually taking place. Get up early some morning, before the sun rises, and look out toward the river. You may see a long line of mist or fog, like a big, white cloud, hanging over the water. Now, this mist is only the water evaporating from the river and is just now visible as fog because the air is cool. After the sun has shone, the air becomes warmed and the fog disappears, but the evaporation goes on, nevertheless. Indeed, it is going on continually, and all over the earth; so that if the water were not returned to us as rain, snow, and dew, all the oceans, lakes, and rivers would in time dry up and disappear. All the trees, grass, and plants would then wither, and our beautiful land would become as dry and parched as the great desert of Sahara.—*St. Nicholas.*

"IS LEARNING TO SWIM, MAMMA.

THE WANDERING ALBATROSS AND YOUNG.

Far out to sea, in the southern latitudes of the Indian Ocean, more than a thousand miles from the continent of Africa or Australia, lies an uninhabited island named Desolation or Kerguelen. Ships passing on their way from Europe or the United States to Melbourne sail quite near this lonely land, and sometimes enter Christmas Harbor, at the northern end, for fresh supplies of water. Here, if the sailors visit it at any time between the months of October and January, they will see vast numbers of the wandering albatross describing graceful curves high in the air, or sweeping down on the table-land where their curious nests are placed.

The albatross, if it is a great wanderer, is also a lover of home, and has an excellent memory, for after five months' voyaging over many leagues of the dreary ocean's waste it always returns at the end of that time to the land of its birth, and occupies year after year the same abode.

It is an odd nest that this remarkable bird makes. It is in the shape of a half cone, and this is the manner in which it is constructed: after a heavy fall of rain has softened the earth, both the male and the female go to work with a will, digging with their strong bills a circular ditch six feet round, pushing up the mud, mingled with grass, nearer and nearer the centre of the circle, pounding and shaping the mass with their spades into a solid mound two feet high; at the top is a shallow cavity in which the mother albatross lays only one white egg.

And now begins a long, tedious season of incubation. More than two months is required to hatch out the young, which at first appears a moving white ball of the finest silky down. It grows slowly, remaining in the nest for many weeks, carefully watched and fed by the parents, which take turns in going to sea to capture small tender squids and jelly-fish for the helpless squab. At last, as if urged by some mysterious force, the father and mother suddenly desert their child, and wander for many months over the "trackless ocean," far out of sight of land, but never, except by accident, visiting the Northern Pacific or Atlantic, where other species of this genus are found. It does not like to fly by night. It is a beautiful spectacle to see it stooping with extended wings from the cloudless sky, and touching the waves with almost the lightness of a feather, as it settles down amongst the patches of floating sea-weed or in the wake of ships, to feed upon molluscs and shell-fish, or the offal thrown out to them by sailors.

What keeps the baby albatross from starving during the long absence of its parents is a question that has never been answered. For a long time it is not able to fly, and therefore cannot obtain its food in the usual manner of older birds. It is possible that it derives its sustenance from the surplus fat stored in its body during the first two months of excessive feeding, or rambles over the table-land in search of whatever it yields of worms and snails. It is certain that it manages in some way to thrive, for when found "it is lively and in good condition."

When the old birds again return from their long voyage, the young albatross, that appears to remember its parents, immediately proceeds to caress them by pecking with its hard hooked bill their heads until that portion between the beak and the eyes is bare of feathers, sore and bloody. This rough kind of fondling is endured for a short time, as if they wished to make amends for their negligence, and then the youth is harshly turned away, while these old mariners at once begin to repair the same nest for another season of housekeeping. When they again set sail, the child of the previous year, that has now attained sufficient strength of wing, accompanies them, to be in turn taught the mysteries of the sea; and after a long and stormy voyage over unknown waters and strange coasts it will return to this island of Desolation, there to choose a mate and rear a little one to take its part in the restless life which the albatross seems to love so well.—*Selected.*

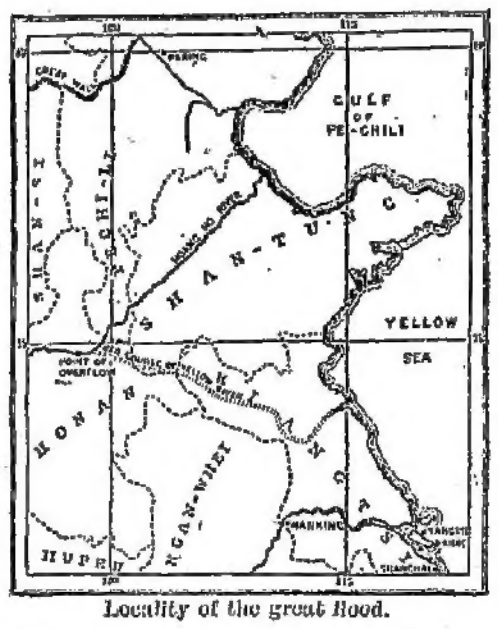
The Humble Child of God cannot successfully maintain an argument with an infidel, perhaps, but he knows something which the wisdom of a thousand infidels cannot refute. In a certain church prayer-meeting, a dear little nine-years-old boy who had just become a Christian arose and stood in his place for a moment, and in trustful, childish treble, simply said, "I know that I love Jesus;" and, even considering the lengthy remarks of the pastor and deacons, that was the wisest and best thing which was said that evening.

When You retire to bed, think over what you have been doing during the day.

CHINA'S SORROW.

(From article by C. F. Gordon Cumming in Leisure Hour.)

To the majority of our readers the term "River" either suggests a glassy stream flowing calmly on through green meadows or through some great city, or else it recalls more picturesque waters rushing down rocky ravines from their cradle in the mountains; but in either case, the vision



Locality of the great flood.

thus suggested is that of a reliable river, not given to any very serious variation either in its bulk or in its course.

Very different is the conduct of many of the huge rivers of Asia, specially those of India and China, which travel perhaps two or three thousand miles from their source in some remote mountain range ere they finally reach the sea. The greater part of their course lies across vast dead level plains, so totally devoid of rocky boundaries that there is really nothing to prevent the waters from meandering in any direction, obedient to any sudden impulse. Such wayward wanderings are generally due to the enormous accumulation of sediment brought down from the mountains by the thousand torrents born of the melting snows, all combining to form the one great stream. Here and there, without apparent cause, the waters deposit this silt, thus forming great sandbanks and shoals, which, in the course of perhaps only a few weeks, suffice to obstruct the free flow of the river, which accordingly glides off aimlessly to right or left, eventually forming a new channel, probably miles away from the bed which it has hitherto filled.

From the earliest historic days the Chronicles of the Empire record the damage done by the sacred stream of the Hoang-Ho or Yellow River, the propitiatory offerings made to the river god by the Emperor and his people, and the enormous sums of money expended on constructing or repairing gigantic embankments in order to strengthen the bed of the river, and induce it to remain within whichever of its self-chosen channels it happened to be occupying.

The records of the Empire prove that "China's Sorrow" (as this Bohemian waterflood is poetically called) has changed its course nine times within the last 2,500 years. But the legends of prehistoric days tell of far greater changes; namely, of a vast inland sea which covered the whole province of Honan, until the Emperor Yii, who now receives divine honors as the mightiest of engineers, devised means for the construction of such stupendous embankments, that the waters of the Hoang-Ho were therein captured and confined at the remote point where they pour down from the high table-lands of Mongolia, across which they flow from their far-away cradle in the mountains of Thibet.

Thus he drained the vast lake, and obtained a new province, so amazingly fertile that it has ever since been known as "The Garden of China." The whole of that enormous area of upwards of 65,000 square miles, is a level plain of the richest alluvial soil, known as *loess*. This is a yellow earth, very light and friable, and, supposing the rainfall to be sufficient, its fertility is inexhaustible. It forms an upper bed of from 100 to 300 feet in depth.

But this yellow soil has all been deposited in past ages by the river,, which derives its own name from the very large quantity of the same soil with which its waters are always charged, and which it continues to deposit in such quantities as to be forever raising its own bed higher and higher above the level of the surrounding plain. Consequently it is only by ceaselessly raising the embankments to a corresponding degree, and strengthening them, that the river is artificially kept within bounds. These cyclopean banks of mud, or of basketwork full of small boulders, and faced with brick and stone, extend for hundreds of miles, and at some points they are so high that to reach the summit one has to ascend sixty or seventy granite steps, when one stands on the brink of a swift river, averaging half a mile in width, and looking down on the boundless level plain. Such banks have to be built so as to allow for the river's natural rise of fully twenty feet.

But what can human vigilance avail against the might of such a stream as the Great Yellow River, when, in autumn, it pours down from the mountains with about ten times its winter volume, flowing rapidly for a distance of about two thousand miles, its waters saturated with sand and earth, which it deposits all along its course, raising its bed and forming shallows, till at length the waters either overflow their artificial channel, or else (sometimes aided by weeks of soddening rain) some portion of the bank gives way? Then indeed "the mighty floods are out," and the officials know that their degradation is certain.

Nine distinct channels are known to have been thus occupied by this fickle stream at various periods within the last 2,500 years, channels which in some districts are still marked by wide tracts of dry dust and arid sand.

But the present generation had well-nigh forgotten the erratic tendencies of these unstable waters, when suddenly, in the year 1852, they burst the northern bank near the city of Kaifung, about 250 miles inland, flooding the land, and spreading ruin and desolation as they swept onward in a north-easterly direction, their course being guided by the rocky range which borders the huge promontory dividing the Yellow Sea from the Gulf of Pe-chi-li. Thus the river was compelled to flow northward till it reached the latter sea, at a distance of fully 500 miles from its old mouth, leaving its former bed a level plain of dust, to the despair of all gardeners, farmers, and traders.

Strange to say, so little did foreigners even then know of anything that occurred—beyond the limits of the treaty ports, that five years elapsed ere the Europeans living in Shanghai had any inkling of the tremendous catastrophe which had occurred scarcely so far from their homes as Edinburgh is from London! Two years later, though it was then known beyond a doubt that the great river had vanished from its accustomed bed, no foreigners knew what had become of it, nor are we even now in possession of any details of that terrible inundation.

Regular sacrifices to the water-spirits are offered twice a year, but with how little result was sadly proved again last autumn, when, on the 28th September, suddenly at dead of night, the raging river burst its banks right in the heart of the Province of Honan, which, for its fertility, is commonly called "The Garden of China."

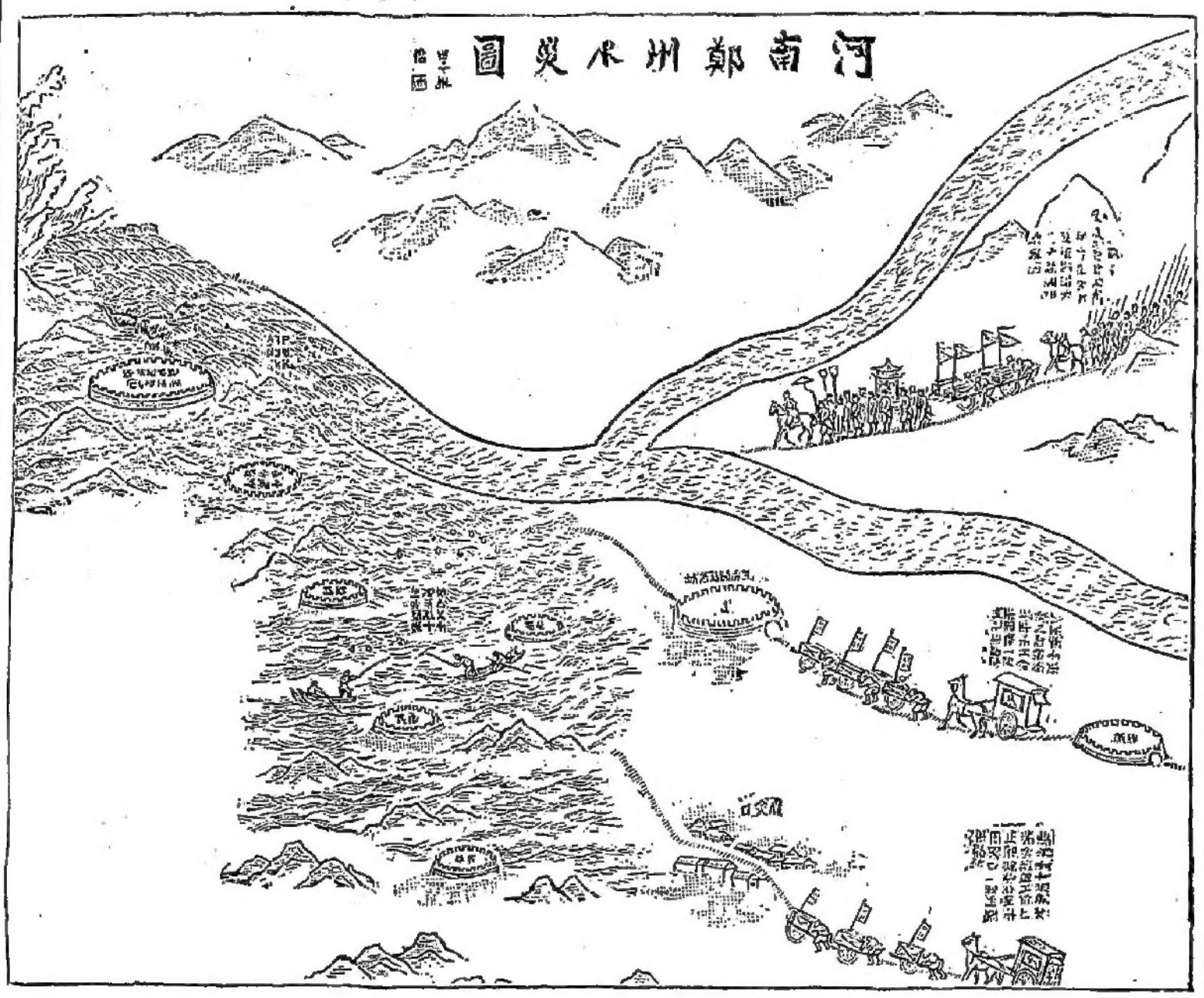
The river being then at its fullest, the embanked portion has been compared to a gigantic reservoir, about five hundred miles in length and nearly a mile wide. Its waters, rushing down at headlong speed, bore with unwonted violence against a corner of the southern embankment, where the river bends, near the town of Chang Chou, forty miles to the west of Kaifung, which was the scene of the disaster in 1852. The previous fortnight had been unusually wet and stormy; the banks were sodden with the prolonged rain, and a heavy freshet, driven by a high wind, brought the last strain.

About a hundred yards of the southern embankment gave way; with frantic, but, of course unavailing efforts, the watchman strove to patch the breach, which rapidly widened to twelve hundred yards. Then with awful resistless rush the escaped torrent poured into the valley of the Lu-chia river, filling it to the brim as a thing of small account; and the appalling deluge forming a mass of water about twenty feet deep in the centre, and about thirty miles wide, swept on over the fertile and well-cultivated Province of Honan, covering about one-sixth of the whole, namely, an area of about ten thousand square miles. In other words, a densly-peopled plain about half the size of Scotland, dotted over with about three thousand large villages and cities, inhabited by millions of the most industrious people on the face of the earth, was suddenly overwhelmed by this awful flood, and transformed into a raging sea.

Imagination can scarcely picture a scene so appalling as this. For two long months the immense volume of the waters of the Great Yellow River have continued to pour down from the mountains on to the inhabited lands, ever enlarging the boundaries of the re-created great inland sea, which has thus once more reclaimed the lands drained by the deified Emperor Yii. It is said of these wide waters that none have as yet reached the ocean—unless, indeed, it be true that a branch of the great river has betaken itself to the channel of the Hwei, or Little Yellow River, and thus flows to the sea. A later account, however, states that much water is escaping southward through the Grand Canal and the river Yang-tse-kiang.

For the relief of the sufferers the Emperor nd Empress-mother head the subscription with 100,000 taels from the privy purse, and 2,000,000 taels (about £500,000) from the Imperial treasury, and command that the whole revenue of Honan be devoted to the task of building banks and dykes for the restraint of the waters. Thirty-two million pounds of rice were stopped on their way to Peking, and sent to the starving sufferers—a good beginning, but it is evident that both private and public charity must do their utmost to meet such great need, and that the strain will be long continued. For when the waters do subside, a considerable part of the land will probably continue to be a malarious swamp, giving birth to wide-spread sickness; fever and ague will assuredly follow as the natural result of miasma and pestilential smells of decaying animal and vegetable matter. Famine too, seems inevitable, for even were the land now dry and ready for sowing, there is literally no seed-corn left, the whole harvest, which had just been safely garnered, being all lost.

The idea at present seems to be, to endeavor to induce the river to return to the channel in which it flowed prior to 1852, and doubtless, by dint of perseverance and energy, the work will be accomplished, and the province will once more be converted into a smiling garden, and for one or two generations all will go fairly well, till the next flood, when the story will be repeated. So long as the system of artificially banking up the raised bed of a river is adhered to, there must always be the same danger. It has been suggested that the only hopeful solution of the difficulty would be to cut a broad and deep canal for three hundred miles to the ocean. Such a channel, once made, might, by continual dredging,



be kept in order, and prove the salvation of the country, but as yet there seems no hope of the Chinese Government undertaking so radical an improvement.

In the present instance it appears that the probability of danger has for some time been foreseen, for not only has the enormous deposit of silt at the mouth of the river gradually changed and considerably raised the bed of its estuary on the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, but the same deposit has been so serious along its course that some months before the disaster the Chinese officials in charge suggested that it might be well to endeavor to relieve the pressure by cutting the embankment near Kaifung-fu (*i.e.*, about forty miles above the spot where the breach has occurred), and to guide the escaping waters back to the channel which they forsook thirty years ago.

Well may all concerned wish that this happy suggestion had been carried out. The Government now seems to ignore that it was ever made, for a very characteristic feature in this matter is the manner in which such a calamity is visited on the unfortunate officials in whose district it has occurred. Though such an unprecedented flood would probably have swept away the mightiest embankment that human skill ever constructed, all the chief men in the inundated part of the province have been degraded. Some have been deprived of the much-valued button denoting honor, which is worn on the cap, and a considerable number, including the sub-prefect, the mayor, the assistant department magistrate, and others, are condemned to be exposed in the cangue along the banks of the river. The cangue, or wooden collar, is a large, heavy, square of wood, opening so as to allow the prisoner's neck to enter, when it is again closed. From the time it is put on it is not removed till the term of sentence has expired—perhaps three months—during which time the luckless prisoner cannot lie down in any attitude of comfort and cannot touch his own head with his hand, so he is dependent on the mercy of others to feed him. Altogether, it can scarcely be desirable to occupy a position of high responsibility in a Chinese district watered by such a stream as the Great Yellow river!

* The Chinese map which we give on an adjacent page bears the title "The Disastrous Flood in the Province of Honan."

The branch of river flowing northwards was its bed previous to the flood, now left dry. That flowing eastward was its ancient bed.

The point of overflow is just above the bend to the left, and the inundation thus floods the Province of Honan lying south and south-east of that point.

The name of the large walled city in the centre is Kaifung; the name of the next in size on the left is Ching-chaou. To this latter city in the map is appended the sentence, "All the inhabitants were destroyed by the flood."

The tablet of Chinese characters in the river itself states that great numbers of the corpses of the dead are floating down the river.

The tablet in the midst of the flood-waters states that a father and son having been floated down ten li (three li to a mile), were rescued from the flood [as depicted].

The upper tablet on the right gives an account of a contribution of 100,000 taels from the Empress for the repairs, also 300,000 subsequently (4 taels equal to £1 sterling).

The middle tablet gives the contributions from Kiang-su—from the literati; the lower tablet states the amounts from Che-Kiang.

THE BUG IN THE BOTTLE.

REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

"You see dat bug, honey?"

It was old Cæsar, the colored gardener, who made this remark to young Pompey. Before the big, wondering eyes of the boy, Cæsar held up a stout bottle. At the bottom of this bottle was a bug.

"You see dat bug?" asked Cæsar again.

Pompey nodded an assent.

"Dat am a bug a-tryin' fur to climb dat bottle an' he kent!"

That was plain. Now and then the bug would make a frantic dash at the walls of his glass prison, and try to scale them, but in vain.

"Dat's de way ob de ole' drunkard. I don' say, honey, a man ken nebber stop a-drinkin', fur some do; but it am dat heap hard dat you mought say it were like dat bug a-tryin' to git out dat bottle."

"Well, what of it?" said Pompey's rolling, shining eyes, though his tongue was silent. What interest had he in this object-lesson?

Cæsar anticipated this inquiry.

"De lesson am dis," declared Cæsar solemnly: "Nebber cotch yerself a-goin' into de bottle. Don' take the fus' taste. If ye gits de lub and de hanker fur it ye may find yerself at do bottom ob de bottle. Go an' jine de pledge!"

Pompey went home thinking. He was only a boy, perhaps twelve; but he had some of a man's serious thoughts on the subject of temperance. Special meetings had aroused a special interest in Pompey's neighborhood. Alexander, the blacksmith; Abe Lincoln, the peddler; George Washington, the oysterman; Thoman Jefferson, the whitewasher, had all, "jined," or signed the pledge. Many others had taken this stand, and the interest was extending to the children. These were asked to "jine."

Some of the adults objected. They asked, "What do children know about intemperance?" Others thought as did Cæsar, who said, "Don' let 'em git into de ebil in the fus' place." To illustrate the difficulties that sometimes attend reform, he devised the object-lesson of the bug and the bottle, and gave it wherever he could find an audience even of one boy.

Pompey went home to tell his old grandmother, with whom he lived, something about Cæsar's impressive lecture. Granny had a reputation as a moderate drinker who threatened to become an immoderate one.

"Come, Granny," said Pompey; "you and me had better jine de pledge."

"A heap ob nonsense, honey!"

"You ought an' go fur to see Cæsar."

"What he got, chile?"

"Bug an' bottle."

Then he faithfully reported Cæsar's short but effective lecture. Granny pretended to laugh at it.

"What fur he call that bug, Pompey?"

"Some kind ob a beetle."

"Dat bug, honey,—I'll tell ye his name; it am humbug. Ha ha!"

Granny laughed till the tears rolled down her fat cheeks. However, Cæsar's illustrated lecture, as reported by Pompey, did make an impression upon her. She would not confess it, but only said, "When ye see yer granny at de botton ob de bottle, den I'll jine the pledge."

She would say nothing more, but, cutting him a big slice of watermelon and a small slice of bread, told Pompey to eat his supper. They were alone in their cabin, and after supper naturally were drowsy; and amid the shadows Pompey saw a startling vision looming up before him. It was a big bottle,—much bigger than the kind Granny liked to keep in the cupboard, but of the same shape. It had the same kind of a label, "Cider."

"Nuffin but apple-jews in dat, Pompey," Granny would sometimes say; but it had such potency that Pompey would notice that, after a draught of "nuffin but," the old lady was sometimes quite excited. Then, as the days went on, it would take a bigger draught from the bottle of "nuffin but" to satisfy her, which Pompey took as a damnging sign. In his vision the evening of our story, he noticed that this immense bottle was lying on its side, and soon Granny appeared near its mouth.

"She's goin' in?" thought Pompey.

Granny was a big woman, but somehow, to his surprise, she slipped into the bottle,—for alcohol, as a rule, is a bigger thing than the human will,—and before Pompey could scream, "Granny, don't!" she was not only in, but the bottle suddenly began to tip up, and poor Granny was sliding down toward the bottom! In a moment she would be there!

He rushed up to the enemy, seized it by its neck, and tugged away at it, trying to keep it down and liberate his relative, and shouting, "Granny, don't! Ye'll go to de bottom, de bottom! Jine the pledge! Granny!"

He shouted so loud and tugged so hard, that he woke himself up. There was Granny's big form before him, and he was furiously gripping it.

"Chile!" she shouted, also coming out of the depths of an after-supper nap, "what yer holl'rin' fur 'an a-grippin' me?"

"You out de bottle, Granny?"

"Out de bottle, honey? I nebber ben in a bottle. Yer thinkin' bout dat bug ob dat ole Cæsar,—mis'able bein, frightenin' de childer."

"I—I—saw ye in a bottle, an' I don' b'lieb yer could git out, Granny. Ye were boun' fur de bottom."

Granny had a superstitious regard for dreams. She now gave the matter a serious significance.

"Yer did, Pompey? Don' yer tell a lie!"

"'Twas you, Granny!"

"Yer own ole Granny?"

"Sure!"

"Uph!" groaned Granny.

"Will ye jine de pledge, Granny, wid me? Sez yer would of I saw yer at de bottom ob a bottle, and yer was boun' fer it."

Granny thought it over. Then she rose, gave Pompey's hand a powerful grip, and together they went out into the night. There was a beautiful moon looking out of a window in the soft, white clouds, and by its light they quickly journeyed to Cæsar's cabin.

"Come in, come in! Right smart glad ter see ye!" was the old man's welcome.

"Want fur to jine the pledge!" explained Pompey. "Me an' Granny."

On Cæsar's pine table, lighted by one tallow candle that his cabin afforded, was a much-thumbed pledge, and beside it was the bottle and bug.

"Look at dat bug, an' sign!" exhorted Cæsar.

Granny recalled Pompey's dream, shuddered and signed. She was not a "powerful" pen-woman, and when she had finished, she said her name looked "suthin" like a turkey buzzard tryin' to git ober a rail fence."

"It's Granny," said Pompey, encouragingly. "She's gwine fur to stick, an' here's me!"

"Pompey Jones" was the signature, in good, strong, clear print.

"Granny!" he whispered, pointing at the creature in the bottle, "dat a humbug?"

She shook her head. "Lot ob troof in dat!"

The two callers went away, but Cæsar quickly summoned them back.

"Jes' a word," he said. "Don' forgit to say a prayer on top ob dat pledge. Dat what gibs de sure vict'ry."

And truth, a blessed truth, was in his thought also.—Sunday-school Times.

KNOWLEDGE is but folly unless it be guided by grace, and directed by duty.—*Herbert.*

Question Corner.—No. 11.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

37. In early Bible times a place was called by a name signifying "The Lord will provide." What was the name; who gave it this name, and for what was the place chiefly noted centuries afterwards?

38. Who was Paul's companion on his second missionary journey and what places did he visit? Name the places in order.

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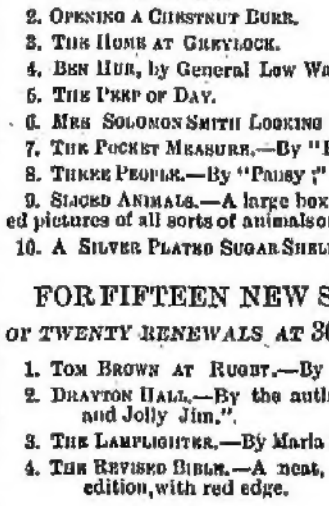

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